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Fairfax Connector Bus Service to Expand Ahead of BRAC

<<http://lorton.patch.com/articles/fairfax-connector-bus-service-to-expand-ahead-of-brac>>

Fairfax County transportation planners presented a new bus route expansion plan at Tuesday's Commuter Workshop at Fort Belvoir.

The plan is expected to alleviate traffic caused by the increase in personnel at Fort Belvoir due to the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Act, said Fairfax Connector Route Planner Paul Mounier.

The proposed plan modifies seven existing routes and adds four new routes originating at the Franconia-Springfield Metro and the Lorton VRE stations.

The modified routes are 159, 171, 305, 307, 310, 331, 332 and 380D. The new routes will be numbered 333, 334, 371 and 395.

Maps of the modifications and new routes are available
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/news/2011/11_006.htm> on the Fairfax Connector website.

"We're generally increasing service," said Mounier. "Routes 333 and 334 are pretty good direct connections from the Franconia-Springfield Metro to the DLA gate."

Route 171 will be broken up into two new routes, with 171 originating at the Huntington Metro Station and ending at the Lorton VRE station, and Route 371 going from the Lorton VRE station to the Franconia-Springfield Metro station.

On-Base Transportation

Additionally, Fort Belvoir will begin to run its own on-post shuttles on June 7. At first, the shuttle will run from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and the transportation department will monitor its progress in order to develop a more solid schedule.

"Think of it as a 'learning shuttle,'" said Claude McMullen, director of logistics at Fort Belvoir. "We're learning the best methods to get commuters where they need to go."

The shuttle is expected to alleviate on-base traffic, said McMullen, by decreasing the amount of cars on the roads.

Future Plans and Commuter Input

"This isn't the end," said Mounier. "Once the roads are constructed, we'll have more of an idea of how the buses will run and we'll look to add more options to provide the best service."

Transportation planners from Metro, Virginia Railway Express (VRE) also spoke with base employees and residents about transportation alternatives such as ridesharing benefits and programs and bus service.

"Transportation demand management is not about one plan, it's about a whole bunch of plans, programs, tasks, and activities that work together to do their part to reduce traffic and single occupancy vehicle trips in the region," said Stephen Brooks, Fort Belvoir deputy to the garrison commander. "We encourage rideshare, we offer alternating days off and telework for eligible positions, and are looking for ways to help facilitate an internal shuttle."